

Goodwin's Weekly

Library University of
Utah.

Vol. 22

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, MAY 16, 1914

No. 21

*An Independent Paper Published Under
the Management of J. T. Goodwin ::*

EDITORIALS BY JUDGE C. C. GOODWIN

A Word For Western Railroads

LAST week a strong delegation of railroad managers, including the heads of some of our great western roads, appeared before the senate committee on railroads and petitioned for the right to advance western freight rates 5 per cent.

The petition should be granted. The truth is this: When the steady flow of treasure from the mines of the west gave to our country the credit in Europe to borrow money for railroad building, or, the same thing, to sell railroad bonds, many shrewd parvenues seized upon the opportunity to make swift fortunes. They organized companies obtained from states and from the general government vast tracts of public lands, obtained free rights of way and often begged great subsidies—free gifts—from cities and counties, and then sold bonds more than sufficient to build and fully equip their roads, and still owned the full control. Then no spark of gratitude warmed their hearts, rather, in considering rates they never tried to reach a just decision, but appeared only anxious to estimate what patrons would pay without becoming frenzied and in indignation and desperation tear up their tracks.

These abuses continued for a generation, the people paying full interest on the bonds and also enough more to give the owners and managers dividends of equal amount to men who had not been out a penny in the building and equipping of the roads.

To remedy these wrongs the Inter-state Commerce law was passed and the commission appointed. That commission did good work for several years. The commission began its work just when the old magnates were dying rapidly and leaving the roads they had mismanaged with little but the right of way, some rusty, wornout tracks and much worn rolling stock, so that thousands of miles of road had to practically be reconstructed and re-equipped. In those days the work of the commission was good. It stopped the abuses and placed the business of railroading on a legitimate basis.

But in doing this, of necessity, it destroyed the credit of the roads in financial centers and made the work of reconstruction most difficult. Except for the wonderful growth of business and the increase in population all the roads would have gone the same way that the New Haven went which runs through a region that has been stationary for twenty years.

Five years ago Mr. J. J. Hill of the Great Northern pointed out that because of the vast increase in business and inhabitants the railroads of the west must be enabled to borrow vast sums to keep up the efficiency of their roads, tracks and rolling stock to meet the natural advance in business. The roads cannot borrow money as formerly; the only way to meet the crisis suc-

cessfully is through their rates and when such men as Judge Lovett, Frank Trumbull and Samuel Rea make a plea for roads running through mountainous and sparsely settled regions, it should be heeded. Of late it has seemed to us that the government prosecutions have changed to persecutions.

For instance, when the commission declared that the old Central Pacific and Southern Pacific must have different owners because they were parallel roads it seemed to us that the zeal of the prosecution had blinded the judgment of the commission. The roads are on an average more than 600 miles apart. Between them part of the way are a dozen rival roads; the Atchafalpa, Topeka & Santa Fe and the Rio Grande all the way; the Northern Pacific is nearer the old Central Pacific than the Southern Pacific is, and to separate them leaves one or the other in the air before it reaches San Francisco bay.

And when the commission, in effect, says: "We know we have destroyed your credit in financial centers; you must meet your imminent needs by the returns from your business, but you must not raise your rates;" it takes on more the look of a hold-up than of clear business reasoning.

The harvests are soon to be moved, more coal than ever must be carried to market, to meet this increased demand the roads must be in condition, and in the interest of the whole people, the commission should grant everything reasonable to meet the fresh demands with expedition and with safety to passengers. If the present law makes that impossible, the law should be changed. The prosperity of the country, the very life of the cities rest on the service of the railroads and that service should not be crippled.

Some Home Troubles

THESE should be rather anxious days to President Wilson and his chief advisers. The President drove through his not much disguised free trade bill until it became a law. But somehow it is not bringing the promised millennium. Prices have not fallen, not one more of the idle men of the country has found employment because of it. Rather a great many big industries are slowing down in preparation of going out of business. Moreover, the imports into our country are increasing, the exports are falling off. Except for the immense interior of our country and the vast volume of business in that region, the nation would be even now realizing the difference between buying something for a dollar from abroad, and sending the money out of the country to pay for it, and paying a dollar and ten cents for it and keeping the money at home. That subject has often been threshed over, but it seems necessary about once every generation to knock our country down and give it a black eye to renew its sight. The trouble is that last sentence is not a paradox but a fact to cry over.

The currency law does not quite seem to satisfy the business conditions of the country. We were told that it was going to loose a great many millions of dollars, hundreds of millions, and that was what was needed. So we felt as Nasby did

when he invented his machine for printing money. Nothing was to be required except to turn a crank to get all the money needed. But has any gentleman found it easy to borrow any money of late without first going into confessional about his securities? And if they are not quite orthodox has he been able to get the money? Now the next proposition is to waive our right to pass our coast ships through our canal free of tolls. This would be ludicrous if it were not so serious.

Again, we understand our government has contracted by treaty to pay Colombia \$25,000,000 of the people's money to conciliate her. She broke her plighted faith in an attempt to steal some millions of dollars due to France for her work on the Isthmus in the old impossible days when the Panama fever was the dominant power on the Isthmus. The failure to compass this steal gave Colombia a stomach ache which has disturbed her sleep ever since. Our benevolent government proposes the \$25,000,000 soothing syrup to effect her cure. As though it were possible to buy friendship from a characterless knave! But that is not the worst of it. The president and his state secretary, all the railroad lawyers and press of the east declare that to save our honor, we must of necessity stamp out our coast shipping—but we turn around and write a pass for Colombia to send free through the canal all the ships under her flag. What will prevent her having a mighty merchant marine within six months?

But while attention has been called to foreign troubles, there is a trouble at home which is most serious. A good many years ago a scoundrel named Boyce obtained control over the miners' union at Butte and began his operations. But Marcus Daly was in power there then, and he or his position gave this scoundrel an idea that he had better try his game in outside states. The decent men in the miners' union would not stand for his methods. He began in Idaho, and it cost a good deal of blood and a great deal of money to put him and his fellow murderers down. The next trial was in Colorado. There trouble began at once. It has never been effectually settled since. In the meantime the original scoundrel through a lucky deal made a fortune, and his interest in the "down-trodden workingmen" ceased at once. But his original plan of rapine and murder was taken up and for a while under Moyer and Haywood kept Colorado a place compared with which hell is a roof-garden of peace and happiness.

This went on until the assassination of the governor of Idaho and the arrest and trial of Haywood for ordering his murder. The witness Orchard testified to the full particulars, and while no one doubted the truth of his evidence, of course it was not possible to convict a man on the unsupported word of a self-confessed assassin, so Haywood's neck escaped the halter, but it was a close call for him and made him cautious for a few years.

But in the meantime a new order arose—the I. W. W.'s. The statement of their "principles" establishes that they are public enemies.

Haywood and Moyer naturally gravitated to the leadership of this sinister organization. The